



**2022 Vidya Gaem Awards**  
*Award Speeches*

**PAUL ALLEN'S AWARD FOR BEST BOX ART OF ALL TIME**  
**WINNER: DOOM (1993)**

**AI DR. KLEINER:** Good evening buyers, welcome to the Paul Allen Award Auction for the best boxart of all time!

Now, I ask you to take your seats before we bring out these wonderful artworks.

Our first showcase is the US box art for Deus Ex. Released in 2000 and developed by Ion Storm, this sample was well ahead of its time, and defined the early 2000s artstyle.

Our second showcase is Metal Gear Solid 2's US box art. Released one year after Deus Ex, Hideo Kojima stunned the world with a video game box art that truly respected the term "art".

The third showcase for this evening is ICO's box art that was published in Japan and Europe in 2001 and 2002 respectively. This box art design was too tasteful for Americans and upon audience testing would often leave them confused and speechless. It was then established that the United States truly had no taste.

Our fourth showcase is the Mystery of the Druids US box art design that was more appealing to the feeble American mind -- though in my opinion, is kind of funny.

And last but not least the OG DOOM published in 1993. A box art design that defined the game even if you knew nothing about it. A revolutionary game with groundbreaking art to go with it, truly a wonder of its time!

Now, I must be honest with you, I kind of lied about the auction shit to get as many of you into the room as I could! The results are!

[THROWING FLASH BANG!]

DOOM - with 826 Sweep Points!

Let me say a little something about DOOM... it fucking rules! That soundtrack kicks fucking ass. I could

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listen to that shit all night long playing this game into the wee hours of the morning while my mother begs me to turn the computer off, because we're spending too much on the power bill. I say "Fuck you, mother! I'm ripping and tearing, and unless you join me also, you can get fucked and keep bringing in those delicious chicken tendies. Oh god, how I miss her cooking. It's a shame, really, that time moves faster than we do ourselves. But enough weeping, let's continue fucking shit up!

**LEAST WORST AWARD FOR LEAST WORST GAME OF THE YEAR**  
**WINNER: Elden Ring**

OOOHHHHH Elden Ring, was there any doubt that you would win?

Miyazaki blows the world away by selling Demons' Souls for the sixth time, but this time it's been improved with an open world that puts most open worlds to shame.

FromSoft's years of experience creating a smooth action RPG experience have come to a head with Elden Ring, giving us a Souls game that constantly delivers in atmosphere and exploration. From accidentally teleporting to Caelid, to riding an elevator downward for a full minute to Siofra River, to reaching Atlus Plateau and seeing Leyndell in the distance - Elden Ring instills a sense of wonder that puts it at the pinnacle of open world games. The combat is smooth and varied, the bosses are as over-the-top as ever, so over-the-top in fact that journos and normies were crying Mimic Tears. And the lore has that classic FromSoft layer of obfuscation. It's not just an open-world Souls game; it's an open-world game with soul.

**MOST HATED AWARD, FOR MOST HATED GAME OF THE YEAR  
WINNER: Saints Row (2022)**

"Everyone thought that Saints Row had reached its maximum in its fourth iteration when you fought off an alien invasion as the President of the United States, but Volition outdid themselves - this time, they rocked the boat by forgetting what made the series stand out in the first place.

The result is a soulless attempt to rebrand the identity of a sixteen year-old franchise into whatever a bunch of lazy investors think "the kids" are into, while still being mired in mid-2000s crime sandbox gameplay design. No Johnny Gat, no Stilwater, and a "new" cleaner and duller Saints Row image to match the spineless writers who seem to have done it all deliberately in spite of the fans.

After six months of delay, it released to a wet fart of fanfare: The gameplay is basic, the sandbox is more cardboard than sand, and worst of all, the many, many bugs on day 1 that ranged from cars getting launched, to the climax being funnier, but not on purpose

Actually, let's dive deeper into this. Consider last year's winner for Most Hated: Grand Theft Auto and their hackneyed, so-called "remastered" version of their classics. Every franchise in existence must now have some sort of reboot/remake/remaster that resurrects the dead and puppets their corpse for people to throw their money at. It wasn't that the game couldn't be good; more like it was doomed to be bad: A blatant by-the-numbers release that checks a ton of boxes but serves no greater creative purpose. They didn't end up getting away with it, not with the reception they got, but this won't reverse the greater trend we've seen in movies, television, music and now video games where we are being told to forget about old, perfectly fine and enjoyable products and to please come quickly to consume new product.

Dead Space is perfectly playable on modern platforms, but right now we have seen both an unnecessary remake and an unnecessary reboot from the original creator released just a month apart. Somewhere, alone in a private office, an executive for a major game publisher is crawling through mountains of data, praying to an algorithm as if it were some kind of god, seeking any way to justify the last five

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years spent without any meaningful human contact. "Money! Power! It has to be here somewhere. Family? Sports? Walking outside? No, I gave all of those up a long time ago. For the money and the power. They have to be here somewhere! My sacrifices cannot have gone in vain... I'm barely human now! It has to have been for something!"

I can't wait for all of you to fuck off"

**JACKIE CHAN AWARD, FOR BEST CHARACTER**  
**WINNER: Jack Garland (Stranger of Paradise: Final Fantasy Origin)**

Right from the very first trailer, it was obvious that Jack was a doomed man: He would fight the demons, and then become the demons. That kind of confidence and swagger will make an audience beg to know how it all happened. But this award is bigger than Jack: Like any good hero from the pulp adventure days of yore, everything is perfectly crafted to suit him: The party members who give him shit for his grimdark attitude, the expository NPCs that he cuts off midway, and the beautifully-crafted gothic world they occupy.

15 or 20 years ago, this kind of game wasn't really special. We all know the type; edgy protagonist absolutely BTFO's all his friends and the meaningless NPCs around them; how will they ever recover? But in [current year], Stranger of Paradise was an absolute breath of fresh air in a sea of chaotic smog.

The sheer amount of sociopathic contrivance for every character to believe and follow Jack is certainly fanfiction-worthy, but it is never dull; not for a second. Of course, a lot of critics played it and called the plot "stupid" and "nonsensical", totally missing the appeal of why anybody would like a character like Jack in the first place. Yeah, maybe it isn't "believable" and you're struggling to get "immersed", but there's an argument to be made that a game that is written like this is even more immersive due to the fact you know it's ridiculous and unbelievable. Y'know; the thing fiction kinda really excels at? We're not gonna say it's perfect, but no game in recent memory has been this ballsy with it's story, and Jack was the right man to carry those massive brass balls.

**SCRAPPY DOO AWARD, FOR WORST CHARACTER**  
**WINNER: The Entire Cast of Saints Row**

It says a lot when instead of a single character, we just say "fuck it, you're all shitty characters", a move we usually save only for the worst of the worst, like Sonic Boom, Battleborn and Borderlands 3. Gone are playas like Shaundi, Pierce, and of course Johnny Gat. Instead it's a shirtless clone of Wrench, the masked guy from Watch\_Dogs 2 of all things, some random lady who's utterly forgettable, and a token Elon Musk wannabe tech bro.

Even the Boss isn't spared from the horrible writing. Your playa isn't some tough gangsta from the hood, or a wizened mastermind; they're a college student whining about debt; You're all bi-polar as fuck too, going between a generic cast of sitcom characters, to psychopaths that gun down a lawyer for just being slightly obnoxious, then trying to be heartfelt over Happy Meal toys. The biggest crime they all partake in, however, is the crime of being unfunny.

You don't hear the laugh track, but your mind is still playing it. There's enough empty space between dialogue to slip an awkward cough after every line, you'll bitch and moan every time they defuse a scene into a lukewarm gag, and you'll be begging for a skip button during the mid-mission car rides. The Saint's Row cast is so out of touch and unrelatable that you can still smell the pumpkin spice latte some cali writer spilled on the script, churning out soulless content for their soulless manager to approve. "The kids will love it!" They swoon, "The main characters are so likeable and full of personality! Right? Right?!" The FUCK they are!

There is a but a single saving grace in this mess. The only decent character that can be salvaged, maybe...

It's the fucking cat.



**REDEMPTION ARC AWARD, FOR BIGGEST REDEMPTION IN GAMING**  
**WINNER: Mick Gordon (for standing up for himself)**

"Mick Gordon, a familiar figure on /v/ and on the /v/gas, composer of the best OST of 2016 and 2020, chosen by (you) Mick's works on the DOOM series with Bethesda are well known, but what was not well known was the usual shittiness of Bethesda extending not only to their customers and games, but also to their contractors. Bethesda, like any huge company, thought they could get one over on a smaller creator.

This all stemmed from a really public showcase of pettiness by the id software director, blaming Mick for the apparent "mess" around the soundtrack, basically killing Mick's public image as a professional music composer, which later also exposed their private attempts at miscrediting and underpaying him for his work. The trophies Mick earned are on display in their offices!

Luckily, Mick is a patient and organized man, so when it came time to properly explain the situation, he did it directly, clearly and at a level of professionalism that Bethesda and id software probably never could muster.

In fact, this award is less about Mick making a comeback, and more about Bethesda and Id Software putting the little guy through hell.

Rock on, Mickey."

**HATE MACHINE AWARD, FOR CRIMES AGAINST GAMING**  
**WINNER: SJWs**

"The rest of the world finally caught up to the Something Awful forums, using 4chan as a conduit or a scapegoat for other means. If you look at the actual voting data, nobody gives a fuck about Hogwarts Legacy, and nobody gave a fuck about Bridget. These are threads created by tourists, for tourists, to win internet arguments on other sites and (this may surprise you) have nothing to do with video games.

When one of these ludicrous proxy wars finds its way to 4chan, they are promptly blasted by /v/ for forcing their way into the conversation. When screenshots of /v/'s reaction go to twitter or discord, those users feel a smug sense of superiority over the people whose time they've wasted. In the end, everyone gets what they want - something to complain about

If there is anything to thank you for, it's for maintaining the legend of the 4chan boogeyman, a website so terrifying and offensive that normies dare not tread. You keep them out for us, and you do it for free."

**BORNE OF METAL SOULS AWARD, FOR MOST FORMIDABLE OPPONENT  
WINNER: Vergil 3 (Devil May Cry 3®: Dante's Awakening Special Edition)**

"Seeking his father's lost power, Vergil will stop at nothing to make sure he gets what he wants, even if it means one last bout with his twin brother.

Being the older twin of the sons of Sparda, Vergil's appearance throughout the game strikes fear in the player as each encounter sees him evolve. From a one-on-one battle on top of a tower, to the tower's ritual chamber, and finally culminating right in front of the gate to hell itself.

Equipped with not only his famous Yamato, Vergil now has control of Force Edge, the legendary sword Sparda used in the war against hell. This new blade makes him the most formidable opponent, sporting brand new moves in every fight to give the player fits

Vergil was actually on the ballot last year, as the only contender that wasn't from Souls-ring-like or "one of the good" movie games. And he is back, and more motivated than ever."

**POWERPOINT AWARD, FOR BEST VISUAL NOVEL OF ALL TIME**  
**WINNER: Phoenix Wright: Trials and Tribulations**

"Best Visual Novel of All Time on a site like 4chan is a hard thing to discuss. Considering this Award is more culturally relevant for /jp/, discussion doesn't typically take place on /v/.

999 has mind-bending puzzles and an even more mind-bending premise. Fata Morgana enraptures readers with its non-traditional storytelling. Danganronpa requires the player to manually explore your environment and find the truth through stylized minigames. While Katawa Shoujo had the home field advantage, being the most atypical romance novel crafted from our weird little corner of the internet.

Despite all the incredible opposition, Phoenix Wright always has us dying to return back to the walls of its kangaroo court. On the surface, Phoenix Wright's low budget can seem like an immense detriment. But every penny is spent with the smartest dedication to presentation and direction.

In a genre where most other games just play a single music track in the background with the same looping CG's as the text scrolls by on auto, a single press of the A button in Phoenix Wright can give you satisfying screen shakes, reactive character animations, dynamic music integration, and deafening "OBJECTIONS!" adding more to the visual part of Visual Novel.

All this effort puts emphasis on all the right places, with the prosecution and witnesses squirming in their seats after you effectively pull the rug out from under them. Their animations delight as you crush their composure with your intuition. It's incredibly satisfying, immersive, and elevates Ace Attorney games above their contemporaries.

Trials and Tribulations was supposed to be Phoenix's last hurrah from director Shu Takumi, who put everything he had into this title. The origins of series regulars are revealed, as well as the recurring storyline in the Fey clan comes to a shocking conclusion as it delivers some of the biggest narrative heights of the series. You'll need at least 37 cups of your favorite dark roast just to get through all of it, but not a single drop is wasted."

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**PLOT AND BACKSTORY AWARD, FOR BEST REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN**  
**WINNER: Elden Ring**

In this matriarchal society, all women are queens, or shall we say, GODS. Everybody is looking for a maiden for power and comfort. The game showcases several ways by which characters' lust for power and want for love lead to most of the conflicts. There's a wide variety of women that cater both to every fetish and every type of relationship. From Malina's aloof personality and tsundere tendencies, to Hyetta's weird eye thing, to Fia's apparent necrophilia. In fact, if you extend that idea to all NPCs, the game caters to several other tastes: Rya to the monster girl white knights, Millicent to the amputee enthusiasts, Aurelia for the jellyfish fuckers, Marika to the Oedipus complexes; the list goes on. There's a female NPC for every fantasy in Elden Ring, even the most degenerate fantasy of all... marriage.

**VAN DARKHOLME AWARD, FOR BEST REPRESENTATION OF MEN**  
**WINNER: Stranger of Paradise: Final Fantasy Origin**

**[VERSE 1: Donny Q]**

Lost to demons  
In a fight  
They sent me flying on my ass  
Chaos beat me  
That won't stand  
That bitch is gonna feel my wrath  
Like a hunger  
Like a thirst  
Stay back or you jerks are first  
I awoke and my memory's gone  
But I'm sending Chaos  
To oblivion

**[BRIDGE]**

Chaos had been turned into a white-haired girl  
(White-haired girl!)  
Don't believe her when she calls it a fairy tale  
(Fairy tale!)

**[CHORUS]**

Chaos!  
Chaos!  
Chaos!  
Chaos!  
Chaos!  
Chaos!  
I'm coming up to Chaos in an odd land!

**KAMIGE AWARD FOR BEST EROGE**  
**WINNER: Wolf Girl With You: Full Moon Edition**

**GHERRIT WHITE:** And now, the youngest and oldest member of the /v/GA team debate Liru's victory in best eroge.

**NEW:** Who the fuck is this?

**OLD:** It's Liru! It's Never Ever! It's here!

**NEW:** Okay, but who the fuck is Liru?

**OLD:** She's a legend, dude

**NEW:** What anime is she from?

**OLD:** I dunno \*laugh\*

**NEW:** So you're only familiar with her because she was constantly posted by some waifu-obsessed loser in the late 2000s

**OLD:** ... yes. But you weren't there, man. This game has been in development since forever. I watched this thing grow up. Something you have yet to do

**NEW:** I can't get excited for some vanilla furry visual novel when there was actual games with actual gameplay on the ballot this year. The one year, the ONE year we don't have a fucking Rance game and we still have some flavor-of-the-month bullshit riding on name recognition!

**OLD:** Well, I mean it IS Liru, after all. This is why I can't show you old bands, like Weezer. It's beyond your time. You don't get it

**NEW:** Yeah, I don't GET why we're handing the trophy to some DLC for a game that came out six years ago

**OLD:** Six years ago, you couldn't even get boners, dude.

**NEW:** Fuck you!

**OLD:** Hey, fuck you too! By the way, I'm gonna go download the game now.

**NEW:** I think I will, too

**OLD:** Cool. Don't tell me how it goes.

**IP TWIST AWARD, FOR BEST NEW IMPLEMENTATION OF AN OLD FRANCHISE**

**WINNER: Kirby and the Forgotten Land**

When HAL tried to bring Kirby into 3D with The Crystal Shards, they decided to go with a more dynamic, Klonoa-like camera view, placing Kirby on a 2.5D Plane, but in a 3D Environment. While this still limited Kirby compared to his contemporaries, HAL was able to take advantage of the extra dimension in some respects through the game's unique art style and attention to detail in its environments.

Fast forward over 20 years, and HAL finally mustered up the courage to take the 2D training wheels off the pink puff. Not only does this game succeed 64's combinable abilities by introducing upgradable copy abilities, Kirby can now stretch his mouth far and wide to almost swallow a car, a traffic cone, a lightbulb, and many other real-world objects. The new opportunities for puzzle-solving harken back to how certain copy abilities were used in select areas of previous games, only now taken to a new, occasionally grotesque, extreme.

And it's not just gameplay where HAL extended their reach; taking Shiver Star's idea of a post apocalyptic Earth and running with it helped give this game a unique aesthetic and flair that set it apart after the last few 2D Kirby games were critized for feeling too samey.

One can only wonder where Kirby will go in the future. Perhaps it's only a matter of time before the pink puff goes open world. In the end, we can agree that this game is a mouthful of fun for fans of the franchise.



**CIRNO'S PERFECT MATH CLASS AWARD, FOR BEST EDUTAINMENT GAME  
OF ALL TIME**

**WINNER: The Typing of the Dead (1999)**

Are we developing shitposting skills or killing time shredding zombies? The Typing of the Dead series has you gatting zombies and typing out an essay at the same time; every big brain word scratches off another of the mutant undead. Typing Dead chads transcended common knowledge, their IQ expands to triple digits every time "Salad" is typed out in rythmic sequence. It's the definitive typing-learning experience, bundled with carnage and bad voice acting, there is no other combiation of media that will offer you or others the ideal learning enviroment. Throw in mod support and official DLCs, and you have endless ways to save the world by demolishing every word and walker in your path.

**DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH AWARD, FOR BEST GAME THAT NOBODY  
PLAYED**

**WINNER: Frogun**

"Step one: Frog. Step two: Gun. A premise so simple it almost fits onto an LCD from Tiger Electronics.

Frogun succeeds in reminding us of the simpler days of video games, where the graphics were colorful, the gameplay was tight, the collectables were everywhere, and the plot was merely an excuse to keep things moving.

The modest kickstarter goal was met within two hours, and it went on to earn six times that.

Mascot platformers may be an old genre, but there's still some magic in the formula when you mix a spunky protagonist with charming aesthetics and sound design.

You might compare this to Shovel Knight, which also evokes an earlier age of gaming while removing the jank.

Well, most of the jank. Much like Renata herself, playing this game might leave you with a big goofy smile"

**PRESS X TO WIN THE AWARD, FOR WORST GAMEPLAY**  
**WINNER: Diablo Immortal**

"Oh, Blizzard. Blizzard, Blizzard, Blizzard. You just can't catch a break can you?

The announcement of this mobile abortion heralded the beginning of the end for this once-great company. So, now that the dust has settled, what are we working with?

If you look up guides on Diablo Immortal, out there lies a spreadsheet so you can balance time enjoying the game while using as little money possible to mitigate Blizzard's predatory monetization model. There is gameplay here, but it's muddled, disgraced, and uglified by the game's infinite grind, while pushing in-app purchases the same way Blizzard management pushes themselves on female interns. It's not just BAD game design, it's sinister.

But that was not a surprise. Blizzard has been languishing with their games: Dragonflight's lackluster reception, Overwatch 2's equally obnoxious nickel and diming. Hell, even in this show, the Modern Warfare 2 Remake only managed to squeak a nomination in guilty pleasure because it could not qualify for a single positive award. Maybe Blizzard can still make some good games, but their blatant attempts at whale-hunting smother any good gameplay they could have.

Diablo IV is right around the corner; may Diablo help us.

**CINEMATECH AWARD, FOR BEST GAME OF 2002**  
**WINNER: Metroid Prime**

Metroid Prime was an important game for the series and an important game in everyone's past. Getting lost on Tallon IV, shaping up from all your suit upgrades, and the days spent molded into the couch so you get bragging rights for earning the best ending. It was also the series' first time in western developer's hands - Retro Studios brought forth a fresh new perspective on Samus and the Metroid franchise. For newcomers, it was just another solid entry in the Gamecube collection. For fans and others, it was an ideal adaptation bringing Samus to 3D, and the start of an impressive series that begs another sequel... Please?

**PIXELS ARE ART AWARD, FOR MOST PRETENTIOUS INDIE GAME  
WINNER: We Are OFK**

"Look /v/, I bet you didn't even play this, you just saw the trailer two years ago and creamed your pants when you saw the femboy. For better or worse, you were still right.

We are OFK is an incredibly dull experience, showing us how it feels to be four people in Southern California trying to "make the band." And they do that by giving us the most boring, uninitiated and shallow origin story possible. There's no point in your choices, "gameplay" is just minor changes to the text, and each chapter ends with a music video you can barely interact with. These small bits are the payoff for some of the the most self-centered, insecure and downright cringe-tastic dialogue ever put in a VN. In fact, some of these characters are so privileged and financially comfortable that they have to invent new conflict so they can move the plot along. To make it short - We Are OFK is the most pretentious game that none of you played. For the few who did, our condolences.

**SEAL OF QUALITY AWARD, FOR BIGGEST TECHNICAL BLUNDER  
WINNER: Pokemon Scarlet/Violet**

"As of this writing, Pokemon as a franchise has grossed \$71 Billion dollars. That's somehow what you get for releasing a game like this in such a ramshackle state. Pokemon's been on a downward spiral ever since it left the 3DS. Let's Go was a red flag, followed by the fiasco that was Sword and Shield. Disregarding Arceus, Scarlet and Violet continue this trend by becoming one of the best selling console exclusive video games; of ALL. TIME. It didn't just sell 10 million copies; it sold 10 million copies in three days. Because pokemon fans, young and old, keep eating this garbage no matter how bad it tastes. This kind of busted launch is the new normal for overhyped money-printers, but unlike Cyberpunk or No Man's Sky, there's little hope of a patch coming to fix things

/v/ was flooded with gifs and clips of the game's many, many glitches. Some of which managed to make Sword and Shield look stable.

Taking into account that they churned out three major releases in a year's time, we can see why the quality from Game Freak has become so staggeringly bad. Pokemon games with explorable 3d worlds have existed as far back as Pokemon Colosseum, and despite barely upgrading the models or textures in 20 years, suddenly the game is twisting and morphing into eldritch forms, begging to be released from its painful existence. When catching pokemon, the camera may choose to look away entirely. Maybe because it really enjoys a low-rez tree that just popped into the distance, or maybe because it can't live with itself, the weight of its expectations, and the weight of its failures. We, too, can only ponder what brought us here to the downward spiral of Game Freak, and of Pokemon entirely.

**/vr/ AWARD FOR BEST GAME OF 1992**

**WINNER: The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past**

A smash hit that we've gone many rounds with, and in many different ways, even when some of us couldn't understand it. It took elements from both of its prequels, like hidden paths and multi-plane dungeons, but streamlined them to be less obtuse, yet keep them intriguing. Progress now focused less on grinding cash or points, and more on reaching new obstacles and seeking out tools to get past them. The dungeons became unique, and the solutions to puzzles weren't always obvious, nor was what would happen when you solved them. Even then, the enemies don't make it easy, and neither do the bosses. The fights became more heated, and required a keen eye and a cool head to prevail. It's no shock that all this left a big impact.

Its landslide success was a challenge for other devs to match Nintendo, but also inspired fans to later honor them. Today, this game might feel a bit on rails and easy to speed through. Part of that comes from how we've learned to best deal with its threats and its familiar tricks. That said, it's still worth coming back to. This wouldn't be the last time we stick it to Ganon, but this game definitely set the gold standard for all future Zelda games. It still remains beloved by generations, since 1992 and perhaps forever more...

\*the camera begins to fade out, only to fade back in\*

Except those FUCKING tile rooms! "Ooooh, the tiles!" Who the HELL thought that SHIT was a good idea? If I EVER meet the guy who suggested them, I'm gonna jam my Pegasus shoes UP HIS ASS! I don't give a DAMN how old he is now!

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